

THE COUNTRY AND THE PEOPLE

7

This corresponds fairly closely with the observations recorded at Kieta. According to the statements of white residents, there would appear to have been much less north-west wind during the year I spent on the islands than is usually the case. Possibly in years when this change in the direction of the wind is more marked, there may be a more definite 'rainy season' than was experienced by me. The islands are outside the hurricane belt. Only on two occasions (Jan. 11 and July 9, 1930) was the wind strong enough to do real damage to the native huts, which are not built to withstand a gale. The former of these was remarked by the white residents as being a south-east wind, unusual at that time, when the north-west wind should have been blowing. The direction and force of the wind are important to the natives because when a heavy sea is running their fishing operations are badly hampered, and this, if continued for more than a day or two, means insufficient variety of diet. 132

NATIVE REACTION TO CLIMATE

All these people feel the cold very much. They dislike rain, partly because it brings cold, but also for the wetting, and when forced to go out in it will cut a large leaf, probably of bush taro, to use as an umbrella. During a spell of wet weather, with the thermometer on my verandah ranging somewhere in the 70's instead of the usual 80-90°, they went about with their shoulders hunched and their arms folded across their chests, looking the picture of misery. Any blankets or towels that they happened to possess were wrapped round them, and the few proud owners of a white man's vest or coat wore it day and night. They seemed to begin to feel cold wherever the temperature dropped below 80°. Fires would be lighted, and a group would soon gather round, sitting almost on the top of them, or people would light torches of coco-nut-palm leaves and hold them close to their bodies. I have seen them take a smouldering log and all but burn their skins with it. 151 [213] [372]

They will work all day in blazing sun in the taro garden or fishing on the reef if the spirit moves them. But they do not sit in the sun, and they keep their children out of it. A mother may be obliged to take her baby with her when she goes to search for shellfish on the reef, but she will keep its head carefully under her hood. The more enterprising put up shelters behind their houses to give them shade, 461 [461] [354] [342]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935

ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

PLATE 6



a. DISPLAYING CEREMONIAL CURRENCY FOR A BRIDE
b. NEARER VIEW OF THE CURRENCY DISPLAYED

[Facing p. 86]

583
291
436
276
854

PREGNANCY AND CHILD-BIRTH

- 856 bandages or a cradle-board, are employed to accentuate the effect.
 • [854] There are no cradles; if it is required to put the baby down it is laid on a woman's hood on the ground, but this is not often done, and I do not think it lies on its back sufficiently to cause any occipital flattening.

846 The child receives only the most superficial cleansing for the first five days. Then it is thoroughly washed in fresh water. It may then be taken outside the hut, but its mother is careful to keep it out of the sun. There is a tendency on the part of young mothers nowadays to shorten the period of seclusion in the hut, which they must share with the child, but the old women do not countenance this breach of rule if they can help it. If the child is *tsunau*, i.e. [565] if its mother is a woman of rank, the period of seclusion must be extended to ten days.

LACTATION

- 853 In the absence of any animal whose milk can be utilized, the infant is entirely dependent upon its mother for this essential of its diet. In cases of the mother's inability to feed the infant or inability on the part of the infant to suckle, it usually dies. I did not hear of any cases in which the infant of a living woman was suckled by some one else, but instances are known to me where the sister of a woman who had died was feeding the dead woman's baby, having lost her own.

Babies are not passed round and suckled by different women at various times, as has been reported from other regions. While the child is small the mother keeps it with her constantly, taking it with her when she goes to the taro garden or to search for shell-fish on the reef. When it is a little older it may be left at home in charge of a small girl or another woman, but the mother will return to feed it. There is no attempt at regularity of feeding; it is generally offered the breast if it cries much. Some women have very pendulous breasts, but I have not seen any long enough to be thrown over the shoulder to a child carried on the back. I have often seen a woman bend down with her hands on her knees so that a child standing beside her could suck.

- 757 Women whose children die during the lactation period frequently suffer considerable pain from the retention of the milk.
 824 In the cases which came under my personal observation, nothing was done to relieve this, but in my collection of 'prescriptions'

V

CHILDHOOD

PERIODS OF CHILD'S GROWTH

856 THE following terms are applied to children at various ages:

Petats dialect.	Kurtatchi dialect.	English equivalent.
kukirik	kiso	Infant in arms, applied from the day of birth.
ballat		Infant getting a little bigger.
gungum		Baby who can sit up without help.
sénsén	wáras	Baby who can crawl.
tdtd	pípit i kúnom	Child who can walk a little with support.
na la papdis	pípit a potf	Child who can walk without help, toddler.
plan atson	bdi'i uéte	Boy, general term (lit. male child).
plan hikin	bdi'i mon	Girl, general term (lit. female child).
kukuroé	hóvio	Maiden.

882 Of a girl arriving at the age of puberty, they say, in the Kurtatchi dialect, *mon ifúfi en nan ma*, or *mon ifúfi taputs nan ma*, both phrases meaning a female whose breasts are developing. Of a boy they say *no non datsu*, 'he goes to the bush', referring to the period of withdrawal prior to the first puberty ceremony. After he has been through this ceremony the term *upi* is applied to him, the same word as is used for the leaf hat which is put on at this time, and worn for some years afterwards.

TREATMENT OF BABIES

- 854 Small babies are petted and played with a great deal, not only by their parents but by everybody in the village. The only show of endearment which is permitted in public is that between a small child and an adult. I have never seen a child kissed in our fashion, the corresponding caress is to put the open mouth to the cheek of the baby and pull it away again. A much more frequent form of fondling is patting or stroking. A crying baby will be taken up and dandled up and down in its mother's arms. She will sometimes say to it: 'Tui, tui, tui, tui,' with a rapid trill of the lips which I could not imitate. If it continues to cry, it is usually given the breast. I have also heard the Melanesian equivalent of 'Father's gone a-hunting', which runs: 'Tóvus, ifmanex to eb en i mutin,

CHILDHOOD

167

kui ni agiu, kama en ta tamū. 'Don't cry, your mother will go to
lie taro patch and pull up some taro and bring it for you.' 854 ●

Babies are put to sleep by stroking and patting. Lullabies are 533
often sung, either by making a crooning noise, or by singing softly
words made up by the mother as she goes along. A great feature
of these is the repetition of the last syllable, as in this example,
which is said to have no meaning: '*Pēr per pos satfi mon a pirpalat*
a raku-kū-kū-kū-kū.' Some lullabies are not improvisations, but
are traditional. One of these consists of several syllables each
pronounced separately with great emphasis: '*Boa wu e su ma ri ri*
na to pi ma go lia.' I could not get these words explained, but was
told that all the *war* (spirits of the dead) are called upon, they all
come from the graveyard, and the mother pretends to count them
with this song. Then she says: 'Now lie down and sleep, the spirits
will get sand and put it on top of you and me.' There is a tiny [824]
plant called *owa gurus bai'i* (*Biophytum cumingianum*) which is
plant sleep child

often hung round the child's neck to make it go to sleep. I could
get no reason why this small plant was supposed to have such an
effect, but its use in this connexion was very general. No special
care is taken to see that a child gets its proper amount of sleep
during the day.

Babies are washed by having water thrown over them from half 854
a coco-nut shell; they are then rubbed over by the hand of the
person officiating. One family at Kurtatchi had a large wooden
bowl, which they said came from Manus; they used to put their
babies into it and give them a real bath, but this was exceptional.
All small infants have their skins rubbed with the red substance [302]
called *oin* (see p. 416) mixed with coco-nut oil. This is also put on
their heads, in order to make their hair grow and to keep it free
from lice.

Mothers sing to their babies, and play games with them, just as
they do all the world over, and in much the same fashion. There is,
for example, a game in which each of the child's fingers is touched
or pinched in turn, beginning with the little finger, the mother
saying: '*Kubumu, kubugu, tsiukoir, kububian, awapan, kiri-giri-giri-*
giri,' with the last word running her finger lightly up the baby's
arm; this is always the signal for gurgles of glee. 'Peep-bol' is
played by the mother clapping her hands and saying '*Tar tar tsi,*
keg-keg si' ('Look, look, a rattle!'), putting her hand over the

- 854 baby's eyes and taking it away suddenly with '*Bidr-r-r-r-r!*' Another favourite game is for the mother to sit behind the child, and taking his head between her palms, to rock it gently backwards and forwards, singing: '*A gundra rē'ē, a gundra rē'ē, ku-ku-ku-ku t/īdr,*' with tremendous emphasis on the last syllable, at which she pulls the baby backwards on to her lap. These words are said to have no meaning, as is also the case with other phrases used in games (see also p. 182). It may be that some of these are survivals from some forgotten dialect, or, again, they may be just nonsense. After all, how many of us could give a meaning to 'Eenie, meenie, mynie, mo!' or explain 'Hey diddle, diddle, the cat and the fiddle'?

As soon as he is permitted by custom, i.e. after the child has been washed for the first time, the father begins to help the mother by doing small services for the child, and he will spend much time playing with it and fondling it. A man who had lost his youngest child, a boy about a year old, said to me, with tears in his eyes: 'Now I have nothing to hold.' One of the ways in which a woman punishes her husband when he has displeased her, is by going back to her own people and taking the baby. This happened several times to men of my acquaintance; the result was always the same, the man was so desolate without his youngster that he went and made his peace with its mother and persuaded her to come home again.

- 852 A little ceremony which is performed for all children, whether *tsumaun* or commoners, illustrates the relation which exists between father and child. When the child has recovered from yaws, the mother's people kill a pig and cook it, and then come and present it, together with ceremonial pudding, to the father, 'because he has tended the child while it was ill and washed its sores'. The phrase used in this connexion is *wataman bai'i*, which might be translated 'to father the child' (*wa-* causative prefix, *tama* = father). It will be remembered that the child does not belong to its father's clan. This presentation by its mother's people seems to be an acknowledgement of services which the father is under no obligation to perform.

Learning to talk.

- 868 Parents encourage tiny children in their efforts at talking. They themselves talk to their children a great deal, the father as much as, if not more than, the mother. It is a common thing to see father

145 left upper lateral, so presumably his age would be rather more than
 481 a year, assuming that teeth are cut approximately as in our own
 children. Since my return I have noticed some English children
 running on all fours in the same way, but I am sure it is less general
 516 here than it seems to be among the Solomon Islanders. If a child
 sees anything on the ground that interests him, he will pick it up
 and sit back on his haunches, still keeping his soles flat on the
 857 ground. A favourite amusement with one group of children was to
 set two babies of about this age a little distance away from them,
 and then attract their attention, so that they made for the other
 children, who watched to see which of them got there first. This
 was done so often that it appeared almost like an organized game,
 the babies enjoying it as much as the older children (Pl. 14a).

Methods of carrying babies.

- 854 There are no cradles, but sometimes a baby will be put to lie on a woman's hood spread on the ground. Most of its time, however, is spent in being either carried or nursed.

A very small infant is carried in the arms. Sometimes it will be supported also by having its legs put through a sling made of the broad fibre that grows round the stem of the banana palm, thus leaving one of the mother's hands free (Pl. 13a). At an early age it is set astride the hips, with the mother's hands clasped round it (Pl. 13b). A baby soon learns to stretch out its legs ready to be put in that position when it is lifted from the ground. If it is to be carried far, as on a journey, the child is frequently supported on the hip by a sling of banana fibre, or, nowadays, sometimes by means of an old loin-cloth, the other end of the sling being hung round its mother's neck. Men will also carry infants in this fashion. The native word for this method of carrying a child is *gi*. The
 [857] ordinary pick-a-back (*pāhi*) is also used by both sexes, and this, more often than the hip position, is in favour with little girls, who often carry around a baby not much smaller than themselves. They clearly take a pride in so doing, and often used to bring their charges to let me see what a big baby they could carry. Often the child can run about quite well by itself and rather resents the indignity. To carry a child supported on the palm of the hand, in a standing position, is *ai*, to perch the child on one's shoulder is *matok*. When the child is old enough to hang on securely, it is put to sit on the top of the load of wood or taro its mother is carry-

CHILDHOOD

171

ing (Pl. 186). Before a child who is *tsunaun* can do this, a ceremony must be performed (this is described on pp. 189-93), but nothing of the sort is needed in the case of a commoner.

854

The women do all sorts of hard work with their babies on their backs. I have seen them chopping wood with a child of apparently less than a year clinging pick-a-back fashion without being held. A mother who takes a very young child out on to the reef in the heat of the day, will generally keep its head carefully covered by her hood.

CHILDREN'S DIET

A child will be given taro, which has first been chewed to a pulp, on the very day of its birth. The quantity is soon increased. A woman will place a row of little heaps of this chewed pulp all along her thigh, as she sits on the ground, each of these forming a mouthful for the baby on her lap. Food thus prepared is called *mimi*, a word with which the baby soon becomes familiar, and one of the first he learns to say. Coco-nut, chewed in the same way, is added at an early age, but a child is not allowed to munch taro or coco-nut for itself until it can run about.

853

262

Until the child is about a year old he must not eat bananas, lest he should be afflicted with a disease of the chest called *bira*. A child that has yaws must not be given pig or fish, and must not take its food in any house except that of its parents. It must on no account eat in the presence of a woman who is pregnant, and it must not be given taro from a house in which a man and a woman have recently indulged in sexual intercourse. Since yaws is very contagious, some of these prohibitions have a practical bearing, but in the minds of the natives the harm that would follow the breaking of them is supposed to fall upon the child and not on the persons it must avoid.

[53]

Babies of a few months old are given the husks of areca-nuts to suck. Children of five or six chew the nut itself freely, and also smoke both cigarettes and pipes.

[276]

As soon as the household gets going in the morning, the children are given lumps of taro cooked the night before; these they usually eat cold. They chew coco-nuts at all times of the day, and drink the contents of the green nut when they are thirsty. They share the main meal of the day, usually taken at sundown, with the other members of the family.

262

272

264

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935

ON6 Bula ON6
Kurtatchi

PLATE 13

854
291



b

[276]



[Facing p.171]

a

METHODS OF CARRYING BABIES: a SLING, b ON HIP

DISCIPLINE

854 While they are very small, the children are subjected to little or nothing that we should describe as discipline. If a baby gets hold of something he ought not to have, his mother may take it away from him, but if he howls she usually gives it back. I have heard a woman shout to her baby not to lick up water from the ground, but immediately afterwards he ate a leaf which he had picked up, without comment from her. I once incurred the wrath of the mother of a child of about two, because I took away from him a long bush knife with which he seemed in imminent danger of doing himself an injury. He screamed, and his mother came running, and scolding me roundly for having made him cry, gave the knife back to him. The babies seem to learn at an early age how to handle sharp instruments, for cuts are rare. But they sometimes pay dearly for the experience which takes the place of precept. Burns are distressingly frequent. Fires are lit on the ground, or on the floor of a hut, and there is nothing to prevent a baby from crawling or rolling into them. Not only do no precautions seem to be taken against such disasters, but one of the first things a toddler is asked to do by a lazy parent is to go and fetch a piece of smouldering ember or burning stick with which to rekindle his pipe. Obedience to this—or any other—order is never insisted upon, however. Scenes like this are enacted in every village every day. Father is sitting on the verandah or on a log somewhere about the village, his pipe has gone out. He says to his small daughter, aged perhaps five, 'Di mā ta tsu'a.' 'Fetch me some fire.' 'Tsuga.' 'I don't want to,' says she, without moving. Father takes no notice at all, but goes on with what he happens to be doing without his pipe, and presently gets up and fetches his fire for himself. I have never seen a child made to do an errand if it did not want to.

[565] A child who is *tsunaun* has only to cry, for all the people within reach to rush up to him, and, if possible, give him what he is crying for. Several men once spent the greater part of a day in making ceremonial pudding for Wanas merely because he cried for some. Other children are given what they cry for if it does not involve too much trouble, or, if too big to be soothed by being offered the breast, they are left to cry themselves quiet.

152
855 Some children indulge in tempestuous fits of howling. This sometimes takes the form of a series of disconnected yells which

CHILDHOOD

861 laughed. But I have seen children really frightened by the jokes of their elders, as ours are by threats of 'the boggy man'. Pasab told his little daughter Beawon that something she had eaten by the road had poison in it. She cried, and all the people standing round laughed at her.

863 As a rule but little notice is taken of the habits of children as regards natural functions. They follow the example of their elders. But if a child is seen to be about to relieve himself in front of the

● 854 row of huts, he will be scolded and sent round to the back. Mothers clean their babies with bundles of leaves, which are then thrown away casually into the bush. But the excreta of a baby who is [565] *tsunau* must, while he is very small, be collected carefully and thrown into a special enclosure on the beach because he is specially liable to danger from 'poison'.

CHILDREN'S PLAY

857 Although it is true that these children take up a life not very different from that of their elders, at a much earlier age than do our own children, yet I think they have, on the whole, a happy childhood. There is plenty of scope for the development of character, and some children seem to possess individuality to a marked degree. Life is never so serious that there is not time for play and laughter, even for adults, and the children certainly have their fill of both.

While they are little, children of both sexes play together, but as soon as the boy reaches the age when he puts on the *upi*, which may sometimes be as young as seven or eight (approximately), but usually, apparently, about nine or ten, he is forbidden to play or have any close converse with the girls and women, so these boys form a 'gang' of their own both for games and also for work, in so far as they do not join with the older men in fishing and hunting expeditions, &c. The little girls very early take up their share in the routine work of the village, fetching water, collecting shell-fish on the reef, going to the taro garden, or looking after the babies, and there does not seem to be any tendency for the girls of the village to form a gang. They are more often to be seen going about in twos or threes, or with the older women. Even before the age of segregation, the little boys seemed more often to be playing by themselves than with the little girls, perhaps because the girls were more likely to be engaged in the daily round. No duties seem

852 where they are carefully wrapped up in leaves, one *karios* in each
 565 package. The women cook some taro and cut it into very small
 602 pieces. Little baskets made of plaited coco-nut leaves are prepared,
 574 and are filled with these small pieces of taro. On the top of each
 basket is put a package containing *karios*, the relish. Each of the
 women who are *watsufio* to the child then receive one of these
 baskets, and must eat the contents sitting on the *tagoan*, the front
 or men's verandah, if the child is a boy, on the *babots*, the back or
 women's verandah, if it is a girl. They may, if they wish, send
 some of the food to other women, who do not, however, partake
 of it in their company. But all the small children of the village,
 [417] who come crowding round, are given some *karios* and taro. Then
 a small enclosure is prepared, on the women's side of the huts, in
 any convenient vacant spot. It is made of small logs. They ex-
 plained that it was the same sort of enclosure as they make to keep
 wild pigs caught in preparation for a feast, which is made of logs
 piled up one on top of another. Into this enclosed space must be
 thrown all the taro peelings and other remains of the little feast,
 and the baskets in which taro and *karios* had been placed, which
 must first be torn to pieces. After this time the child's excreta
 • [857] must be thrown into this enclosure, until it can walk. It is too
 dangerous to throw them away into the bush as is done with those
 of a commoner, since some ill-disposed person might find them
 and use them to the child's harm.

4. For first coming outside hut.

852 As was previously stated, in the case of persons who are *tsunaun*,
 565 mother and child must remain inside the hut for ten days after
 [417] birth instead of the five prescribed for a commoner. On the ninth
 day a palisade is erected round the hut, making a little enclosure.
 Next day the child is brought out, coming first into this enclosure.
 Then all the women of the village sit down with their legs touching
 (*asaran paror a gutan*, legs are fixed together), in the same position
 as is used in the marriage ceremony. The line of women stretches
 between the hut in which the child was born and the shore. Then
 a man, who may be one of the child's grandfathers, of either clan,
 or may be no relation, takes up the child and walks with it over the
 outstretched legs of the women to the beach. If there are not
 enough women in the village to reach so far, those at the back get
 up and go and sit down again in front of the line when the child

CHILDHOOD

187

has passed over them. The child is not taken into the water, but held at the brink, while all the men and women of the village enter the sea and play together, the women seizing the men and letting go again, throwing sand and water at one another's heads. 'They play because the child is *tsunaun*.' Then the child is carried back to the hut and all the people return to the village. 852 565

After that, the child and also its mother and grandmother are decorated with aromatic and flowering plants, and the mother carries her baby round the village, calling at various houses, to show them the child. Mother and child then return to their own hut, and all the women gather at the *babots*, where they are all given taro and fish, but no pig. 852 565 574

5. For first touching the ground.

During the early part of its life a child who is *tsunaun* must never be allowed to touch the ground, but must always be carried or nursed. 'A long time' after the ceremony just described, a further ceremony is carried out, to remove this taboo. 852 565 [854]

When the time has been settled, all the huts in the village are told about it, and all the women make ceremonial pudding (usually the work of men), and roll it up into very small balls, and cook it in one of the special-shaped pots called *kepa* (Pl. 61a, No. 3). They make a basket out of three fronds of the coco-nut palm leaf, and fill the basket with the little balls of pudding. Then they go into the bush and search for certain small plants, *katfin* and *sekwit*, aromatic plants with very small leaves. They rub the leaves in their hands, to bring out the aromatic qualities, and tie some on to the wrists of the child, and of one of the women who stand to the child is the relationship of *watstufio*. The child has more leaves fastened to his ankles, and some are hung round his neck. These ornaments must be worn for the rest of that day. 852 565 252 824

The next day all the women of the village collect clean sand, and spread it on the ground in front of the hut where the child lives, i.e. at the *tagoan*. First of all they spread a layer of coco-nut palm leaves on the ground, on the top of these they lay a woman's hood, and then spread the sand on the top of the hood. Fresh *sekwit* leaves are then fastened to the child's wrist, and he is put down to sit on the sand, and plays with it. Then everybody eats some of the small balls of ceremonial pudding. The basket in which it was passed round must not be thrown away. A woman 852 565 574

CHILDHOOD

189

remained till after the evening meal, then they were taken down and thrown away.

852
5657. *For sitting on his mother's pack.*

Commoner children are put, while still fairly small, to ride on the top of their mother's pack—the burden of taro or firewood which is always carried rucksack fashion, by means of straps round the shoulders—without any introductory ritual. But before a child of rank can do this a special ceremony must be held. I saw it done at Kurtatchi, for Wantias, son of Pinari's sister's daughter, *tsunaun* in the direct line of succession. He was then somewhere about four years old.

482
852
854
565

The proceedings started at sundown, by a number of women walking round in a wheel-like formation, the role usually played by men in an ordinary *kōma*, giving the while the monotonous four notes which always accompanies their dance (Pl. 17). *Pesē*, who stands to Wantias in the relationship of *wat/sit/sio*, carried a new pack, consisting of a new sling of banana palm fibre, smeared with red paint, and ornamented with shell rattles and pearl buttons obtained from a store, tied round a large new *kōbū*, rolled up empty. The pack thus prepared is called *tin*, and is like that usually carried to the taro gardens to bring back the load. *Pesē* walked in the centre of the group. Presently a little girl (a commoner a little older than Wantias, not related to him) was placed on the top of the pack, sitting just as Wantias will sit in future. The women continued to parade round and round. One woman carried a bow and arrows, another an axe, another a canoe paddle. They might also have had a fishing-net. These are all objects symbolic of a man's activities. If the ceremony had been for a girl they would have had packs instead of the bow and arrows and the axe, but the canoe paddle would have figured just the same, as women are also expert paddlers. They walked round going through the motions of using these things. Other women jumped about, gesticulating wildly. I was told that the two women who knew this dance the best were both ill, so it was not being done as well as it might have been. Presently Takok, who is not related to Wantias, took the pack and carried *Pesē* on it for some time. *Pesē* is a big woman, so it must have been quite a task for Takok, who is by no means young.

482
852
854
565
535

This continued for a couple of hours or so, with the slit-gong beating at short intervals, the signal for renewed efforts both of

CHILDHOOD

482
565 190
● 854 voice and leg, whenever it sounded. Wanias was not present, it
[777] would have been considered very unlucky if he had accidentally
852 put in an appearance. Apparently this performance is somewhat
535 in the nature of a rehearsal.

852 All the next day the whole of the male population of the village
565 was employed in making ceremonial pudding (see Pl. 33). Some
of the men varied their labours by making Pan-pipes, and the
women were making baskets of plaited coco-nut palm leaves to
hold the pudding. These they made smaller than usual, because
they were for a child. When the pudding-making was finished the
slit-gong was sounded.

Just before sundown two specially large taro tubers, with leaves
and stalk still attached, were laid on the front verandah (*tagoan*) of
Wanias's maternal grandmother's hut, where he and his mother
live (his father is dead). On these was laid a very elaborately
[292] worked woman's hood, covered with an embroidered pattern made
of strips of fibre and dried leaves, dyed red and brown, the kind
of hood women wear on special occasions. On top of this was
placed a sucking pig, held down by one of the older men of the
village. Pinari, Wanias's mother's mother's brother, whom he calls
tsubunē (my grandfather), took some lengths of shell currency
(*beroan*) and rubbed the pig's sides with it, beginning at the tail.
[386] Then he took a large pinna shell full of red paint (*oin*) mixed with
coco-nut oil, and rubbed the pig in the same way with that, then
with the specially prepared pack, and then with a red loin-cloth.
When all these things, which were to come in contact with Wanias
in the course of the ceremony, had been passed from head to tail
of the pig, it was allowed to run away. Then a number of the
women, of both clans, came up in turn, and each sat on the hood
for a minute. Two of the women who were *wat/it/sio* to Wanias
came first, but others followed who bore no relationship to him.

852 A little girl, younger than Wanias, not related, but of the same clan,
565 was held down on the hood while her hair was carefully trimmed
302 by Koawu, one of the older men (it does not seem to matter who
undertakes this duty). He trimmed it all round, particularly just
over the temples and behind the ears, making a clean line. The
way having been thus prepared, Rus, Wanias's mother, brought
the little boy out of the hut and sat down on the hood with him on
her lap. Koawu began to trim his hair in the same way. He was
not at all pleased with the process, and wriggled so much that it

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Bula ON6
Kurtatchi

PLATE 18

854
482
142
291



b. CHILD BEING CARRIED ON PACK



a. WANIAS AND HIS GRANDMOTHER MATEV

[Facing p. 193]

DIET, COOKING, AND MEALS

289

the seepings which run down the cliffs and percolate through the sand towards the sea. 312

It is the duty of the women, particularly the younger women and girls, to bring in the water in the morning and again about sunset (Pl. 36b). It is carried in coco-nut shells cleaned out for the purpose through one of the eyes. The outside of such shells is often polished by continual rubbing, and may be ornamented with seeds or shells stuck in with the 'putty nut'. They are always carefully rinsed before being filled. The hole is plugged with a stopper (*pipip*) made of a smooth leaf (of the plant called *gatan*) by folding it in an ingenious manner round the finger and tucking the ends in. These water-containers (Pl. 36a) are called *ruin*; the same word is used for fresh water generally and also means a stream. They are never used for sea-water, which is usually transported in lengths of bamboo (Pl. 37a). I have known men from the mountains walk many miles to the sea in order to fill as many of these bamboos as they could carry back with them, this being their only means of obtaining salt. 462
415
824
317

Ten or a dozen water coco-nuts will carry home the family's supply for the day. Not much of it is expended on personal cleanliness, but I have sometimes seen babies being washed by having the contents of one of the coco-nuts poured over them. Most of it is used for cooking, chiefly for boiling taro. These people do not, as a rule, drink at meal-times, but will take a draught from one of the coco-nuts some little time after eating. Water will sometimes be carried to the taro gardens for consumption in the course of the day's work, but the liquid from a green coco-nut is more often drunk on such occasions, being usually obtainable in the locality. One could not want a more refreshing drink, since the shell and the thick outer sheath keep the liquid cool under the hottest sun. On the whole they seem to drink comparatively little, especially considering the heat of the sun and the starchiness of much of their food. If a person is thirsty while walking through the bush, and cannot obtain coco-nuts, he will search for a special kind of plant with a leaf similar to that of a banana, the native name of which is *obas*. It grows in clumps, a number of rather thin stems close together. Their colour is greenish streaked with brown. By making a vertical slit in one of these stems a spurt of watery liquid will be obtained, with which, by putting the mouth close to the cut, thirst can be most refreshingly assuaged. There is another taller 312
[515]
272
[854]
271
[252]
824
272
137
137

The belts made by women during the period of mourning
424 AESTHETIC ARTS for a

301 *tsumann* (see Chap. XIV, p. 497, and Pl. 75) have a warp of the fibre
765 growing round the base of the banana palm. The black threads in
565 the weft are obtained from the trunk of the bush banana (*wirtsun*);
283 white ones consist of the same substance scraped and rubbed with
824 sand. The yellow threads are made from the midrib of the leaves
of a plant called *kiki'ie* (*Cycas* sp.), dyed with *totomoin* (turmeric).
The red threads of the specimen figured (in Pl. 75) were drawn
from the maker's loin-cloth; in the olden days she would have taken
leaves of the plant used in making the red part of the women's
hoods, dyed with *riro* (*Morinda citrifolia*).

Deformation of the Person.

304 **Head.** Babies' heads are manipulated at birth and afterwards
for some weeks, by pressing the hands at the back and sides to
make them perpendicular. The effect desired is that which is in-
creased by the method of hair-dressing. At birth it is done by the
old women attending, frequently the grandmother, afterwards by
the mother whenever she thinks of it. There is no 'cradle-board
• 854 deformation'. Babies are put to sleep on the ground, on a woman's
hood or a plank, but their position is varied, and they do not spend
a great deal of time on their backs, so that no pressure is exercised
in this way. No head-dress or bandage is used on babies. They are
not nursed on the arm persistently enough to influence their head
form at all.

304 **Nose.** A baby's nose is pinched soon after birth to make it grow
long. A flat nose is much disliked and is a subject of ridicule. The
septum is pierced at the age of five or six. It is done to children of
both sexes, and is still general. The reason given is that if the
septum is pierced, when the individual dies, the worms will go
through the hole and will not eat the body.¹

304 As a rule, a special feast is made on the occasion of the piercing.
852 But if a feast is in progress for some other reason, it will be made
to serve for the piercing as well. Should the village be in mourn-
ing for a *tsumann*, so that no feast is permitted, the operation
may be carried out without one, if the children's parents do not
wish to delay it till the end of the mourning period. The actual

¹ See further discussion in Chap XIV. For another instance of the connexion
between nose-piercing and the fate of the dead, cf. Codrington (1891, p. 256)
who states that in Florida the ghosts of those whose noses were pierced could
follow the easy path.